

## Eugene Jolas and the Ideal Language

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Taro Ishikawa

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### Introduction

This paper attempts to evaluate Eugene Jolas' theory and practice in searching for an ideal language. He never specified what it was, but he theorized what it should be in various ways. His theory derived from discussions on James Joyce's *Work in Progress* which later became *Finnegans Wake* and was in the late 1920s and 30s serialized in the avant-garde literary magazine *transition*, of which Jolas was the editor. He was also one of the important contributors to the magazine. Jolas recognized an ideal language in *Work in Progress*. In the February 1928 issue of *transition* (number 11) he defined the language of *Work in Progress* as "a polyglot form of expression" and "the language of the future" ("The Revolution of Language and James Joyce" 115). These definitions meant, for him, the features of the future word and literature. In addition to Joyce, the development of his theory was closely connected with psychoanalysis and new media such as film, especially the technique of cinematic montage. Psychoanalysis and film rapidly developed from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, and Jolas actively introduced theories of these new ideas into *transition*. In other words, as will be clear in this paper, *transition* direct-

ly reflected the development of Jolas' theory. It is necessary thus to follow the development of his theory not only in terms of Joyce but also in terms of these new ideas featured in *transition*. Certainly, Joyce's work was always part of the source of inspiration for Jolas' theory and practice. But Jolas developed his own idea in the process of theorizing and practising his ideal language project. This paper then would like to contend that Jolas' ideal language was almost brought to perfection in his later multilingual poetry which, paradoxically, critiqued the language of *Work in Progress*. This paper therefore attempts to demonstrate that Jolas' ideal language was fundamentally multilingual, while the language in *Work in Progress* resulted in the reinforcement of monolingualism and that Jolas' ideal language should be a critique of monolingual value and authority.

Before going into the examination of Jolas' ideal language project, however, it is useful and necessary to briefly make clear a critical response to Jolas and *transition's* relationship with Joyce. Until recently, Jolas and *transition's* profile in literary criticism has been relatively low, while Joyce's distinguished talent in literature has been emphasized. For example, Suzette A. Henke dismisses a collection of essays, including Jolas' 'The Revolution of Language and James Joyce', all of which appeared in *transition* defending the difficulties readers encountered in reading *Work in Progress*, as an unreliable reader's guide to the work because all the essays were written under Joyce's supervision.<sup>1</sup> Henke regards this collection as one of "critical anomalies" (Henke 79) and she considers Jolas as only one of the unreliable critics, in her view, a servant performing his duty for his master. Henke's view assumes Joyce's indisputable authority on which all the contributors' argument depends.

Jean-Michel Rabaté argues against Henke that this collection does not serve Joyce but gives us possibilities to read *Work in Progress* in systematically divergent ways in which the word in the text "functions in all its dimensions" (Rabaté 1998/1999 249). For Rabaté, all the contributors to the collection were collaborators of Joyce, not slavish servants, and they help the reader understand *Work in Progress*. He, however, does not examine the differences between Joyce and Jolas in terms of their language experiment, nor does he mention the general environment in which art and literature sought renewal by engaging with new technologies and media around which Jolas, Joyce and *transition* constructed their view of

literature. Like Henke, Rabaté's assessment of Jolas depends on Joyce's authority rather than on Jolas' activities in *transition*.

This paper thus attempts to make clear to what extent Joyce, Jolas and *transition* assigned the same value to literary experiment, and on what point they differed, arguing that working from what they had in common, Jolas' ideal language program was developed.

## 1

From the outset *transition* was attentive to literary experiments. It featured experimental literary works from various countries. It also featured various artists' explorations of the artistic possibilities of new media such as photography and film. Such explorations were regarded as deeply connected with the literary experiments of contributors. For example, the February 1929 issue of *transition* carried experimental photographs by Man Ray and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy. In the opening essay Jolas gave an overview of the latest developments in painting, music and architecture. With regard to painting, he acknowledged the impact of the camera as follows:

With the development of technology, the possibilities for enlarging the magical have become automatically emphasized. The new use of the camera, with its light and dark contrasts, has made it possible to create expressions of the enigmatic and marvellous, beyond all our expectations. ('Super-Occident' 14)

His main intention, however, was to stress the urgent need to change the form of literature. Jolas insisted that literature should not lag behind the other genres:

While these arts are going ahead, literature is still rooted in the ideas of the past. The reality of the *universal word* is still being neglected. Never has a revolution been more imperative. We need the twentieth century word. We need the word of movement, the word expressive of the great new forces around us. Huge, unheard of combinations must be attempted in line with

the general tendency of the age. We need the technological word, the word of sleep, the word of half-sleep, the word of chemistry, biology, the automatic word of the dream, etc. With this must go the attempt to weaken the rigidity of the old syntactic arrangements. The new vocabulary and the new syntax must help destroy the ideology of a rotting civilization. ('Super-Occident' 15)

His reference to "the technological word" as an important feature of the new literature suggests a close link between literary experiments, as represented in *transition* by *Work in Progress*, and the impact of technology on the arts. The general idea expressed here took shape into a proclamation of the "Revolution of the Word" in the subsequent issue. According to Dougald McMillan, the proclamation was drawn up by Jolas<sup>2</sup> and it contains two statements about destroying the existing linguistic order: "The literary creator has the right to disintegrate the primal matter of words imposed on him by text books and dictionaries", and "He has the right to use words of his own fashioning and disregard existing grammatical and syntactic laws" ('Proclamation' 13). Although the proclamation does not refer to technology, it is clear that Jolas believed that technology would help the revolution of the word. In his essay 'Logos' in the same issue, he mentioned the change of perceptions brought about by film:

Through mechanical means they [film creators] flash before our eyes a series of rhythmized images which produce illuminations without slavish reference points in our sensual lives. [...] Poetry, using the words as mechanics, may, like the film, produce a metaphoric universe which is a sublimation of the physical world'. ('Logos' 26)

He considered that the new literary language should explore the irrational unconscious realm that he believed to be "another world reality" ('Logos' 27). By reaching for such a universal substratum of the unconscious, he believed, the barriers of national languages would be broken, and modern technology would assist this process. What is to be noted here is that modern technologies such as the camera and cinema facilitated the interpenetration of genres, and *transition* was aiming to

reach that goal from the outset.

Jolas developed the idea of the irrational unconscious realm through an idea of conflict between the rational and the irrational realms. In 'Notes on Reality' in the November 1929 issue of *transition*, Jolas made a clear distinction between the past, represented here by the Romantics, and his age. He argued that while the Romantics sought a "synthesis of rationalism and irrationalism and reached [their] zenith in absolute irrationalism", twentieth century literature should search for a synthesis between the rational and the irrational through the unity of them by "the conscious will" ('Notes on Reality' 19). He identified the rational with an individual consciousness and the irrational with the collective unconscious. Unlike the Romantics, he attempted to keep the conflicting power brought about by the synthesis of the two opposing realms.

Jolas did not exclude the rational in favour of the irrational or vice versa. Referring to theories of Freud and Jung, especially those of Jung, he found in dream the collective unconscious in which not only our memories from the birth, but also the collective memories of human beings on the whole from the primordial time were hidden and kept ('Notes on Reality' 17). These collective memories were fragmentary and disintegrated "irrational" images. He saw in the collective memories an "instinctive", "primitive" emotion which was common to us all but suppressed in waking hours ('Notes on Reality' 16).<sup>3</sup> He also considered the waking hours to play a crucial role in keeping the individual consciousness from the collective unconscious and in giving ambiguous images of dream exact "rational" contours ('Notes on Reality' 17). For him, exclusive focus on the collective unconscious brought an access to the world beyond the individual but always risked bringing "irrational" images. Exclusive focus on the life of waking hours, he believed, enabled us to construct clear, "rational" images by referring to external objects, but it always risked shutting down the possibility of enlarging the imagination. Jolas was most afraid of this reduction and fixation of imagination. He believed that the "dream is pure imagination" in which the fragmental, "irrational" images always brought new, unexpected combinations and created new images which seemed for the "rational" waking mind to be absurd ('Notes on Reality' 17).<sup>4</sup> He defined these new images as "spontaneous" ones which were "the *a priori* condition of the creative activity", and they should be organized, he claimed, by "the conscious will"

which was also “a creative agent” (‘Notes on Reality’ 19). To develop these “spontaneous” images in dream, he especially thought highly of the transitional state “before falling asleep or immediately upon waking” (‘Notes on Reality’ 17). He considered this transitional state to be a state of “hypnogogic hallucinations” which meant a state exposed to juxtaposition of concrete, “rational” images of external objects with ambiguous, “irrational” ones of dream, and “the conscious will”, he argued, should organize the images (‘Notes on Reality’ 17-19). Jolas considered that the transitional state had a potential for the future renewal, every time falling asleep and waking, by the will (‘Notes on Reality’ 17). He concluded that “[t]he artistic creation is not the mirror of reality. It is reality itself” (‘Notes on Reality’ 20). In theory, this “reality” is not a static reality but an incessant renewal and reintegration brought about by the will through the conflict between juxtaposed contrary images.

This idea of conflict between juxtaposed contrary images to create a new integration of reality is inseparable from that of cinematic montage. In the June 1930 issue of *transition*, Sergei Eisenstein defined the idea of cinematic montage as “the combination of two hieroglyphs of the simplest series [which] is to be considered not as their sum but as their product, i.e., as a unit of another dimension, another power” (‘The Cinematographic Principle and Japanese Culture’ 92). “Hieroglyphs” meant, for Eisenstein, everything fixed or written on a sheet of paper and film. When in ‘Super Occident’, Jolas claimed that for the sake of the new literature, “unheard of combinations must be attempted in line with the general tendency of the age”, it is clear that he was conscious of cinematic montage.

There is a clear similarity between montage and the theory of Jolas. Just as in cinematic montage, seemingly irrelevant images evoke to the viewer an unexpected one (“a unit of another dimension”), so the conflict between the rational and irrational in the transitional hallucinated state created a new integration of reality. Not only Jolas himself but also *transition* devoted serious attention to film, and as Michael North says, “the most active years in the publication life of *transition*, 1927-1933, coincided with an extended crisis in the avant-garde’s relation to film ...” (North 65). He argued that during these years, *transition* itself became a kind of “logocinema”, “a hybrid object, not only multi-lingual but visual as well as verbal” (North 65). Examining Jolas’ multilingual, ‘logocinematic’ poetry, North concludes

that “[t]he synesthetic portmanteau words on which Jolas’ mature poetry depends so heavily are certainly indebted to *Finnegans Wake*, but they are also attempts to produce a verbal montage that would mimic the juxtapositional syntax of modern film editing’ (North 70). Jolas later declares that we need to “find voice in the mysticism of a montage in words” to create “linguistic interpenetration” (*Workshop*’ 104). Trilingual himself, raised in Alsace-Lorraine and New Jersey, Jolas saw his ideal language as “a hybrid object”, that is, one result of the “editing” or clash and combination of languages. He also saw an ideal language in Creole French and the English spoken on the streets of New York by immigrants from various countries (*Logos*’ 28). It is therefore possible to contend that at *transition*, the word revolution, strongly encouraged by Jolas’ essays and the proclamation of ‘the Revolution of the Word’, was to be considered as an optical as well as an aural phenomenon, and that ideas of such new media as photography and film were to provide much of the momentum behind these essays and the proclamation. Despite the obvious presence of visual materials in *transition*, however, the emphasis in it on “the Word” has led to a general opinion summarized by Dougald McMillan: “the *transition* revolution restored the word to a position of respectability that it had relinquished to the image” (McMillan 122). Rather than restoring the autonomy or “respectability” of the word, Jolas and *transition* were attentive to create the word suitable for “the general tendency of the age” or “the word expressive of the great new forces around us” in which ideas of the new media brought the whole relationship of word, sound, and image into doubt. Although he did not explicitly mention, it is now clear that Jolas’ idea of conflict between the rational and irrational drew on or shared the idea of cinematic montage.

## 2

Now let us compare one of Jolas’ early poems entitled ‘Dusk’ appearing in the November 1927 issue of *transition* with one of his mature, ‘logocinema’ poems, entitled ‘Intrialogue’ in the February 1933 issue of *transition*.

Oor forests hear thine voice it winks  
 Ravines fog gleamen and the eyes

When night comes dooze and nabel sinks  
Trown quills unheard and lize. ('Dusk' 145) <sup>5</sup>

Although there are some grammatical obscurities, the all over images are clear. Jolas' vision of the unconscious is clearly expressed through portmanteau words. As Dougald McMillan points out, "Oor [our or/and ur-] forests" is a symbol of the collective unconscious <sup>6</sup> in which there is an irrational image such as a voice which "winks". In 'Intrialogue', <sup>7</sup> seemingly irrelevant words and images dominate the poem which clearly reflects Jolas' theories, especially those of psychoanalysis and cinematic montage:

Chrismata?  
Our ducts are full of heartling hours, denn unheimlich ist die  
[Asphaltnacht ohne Birken.  
La nuit est devenue un masque-cuir.  
Queer? Stop the hymnus!  
And the Scala Paradisi?  
L'avion anonyme part pour les cryptologues du sommeil. ('Intrialogue' 21)

"Chrismata" is a compound of "charismata" and "chrismatory", suggesting an image of Christian ritual which echoes with "the hymnus" (German "hymn") and "the Scala Paradisi" (Latin "scale or stairway to paradise"). "Chrismatory" is a vessel containing the chrism or consecrated oil. The image of a container makes a connection between "chrismatory" and "[o]ur ducts" which mean vessels in a body; "hurtling" is also a compound of "heart" and "hurtle". This "hurtling hours" suggest uncontrollable sleeping hours of dream during which irrational images or "les cryptologues du sommeil" (French, "the secret languages of sleep") collide with (hurtle against) each other beyond the reach of conscious mind. Moreover, as "ducts" also mean tubes for cables in a machine, the "heartling hours" seem to suggest the time during which a film is shown in which, like cinematic montage, irrelevant images collide with each other. The human body as a machine which has many "ducts" (cables) takes directly irrelevant images from the unconscious to project them in dream. These "hours" and irrational images in dreams circulate our



“ducts” as if lymph or glandular secretions circulate our body through “ducts” (vessels). The images of dream and night are reinforced with those of “Asphaltnacht” and “la nuit” which has become “un masque-cuir” (French “a mask made of leather”). “Nacht” and “nuit” mean night, and the “nacht” is dark like “asphalt”. The asphalt night and the leather night remind us of the “hypnogogic hallucinations”. Ambiguous image of night is given such solid outlines as “asphalt” and “leather” which connect us with external life. The images of mysterious Christian rite and night are told in English, French and German, and “unheimlich” (German “eerie” or “uncanny”) and “queer” are humorously and rhythmically connected with the pun of “cuir” and “queer”.

‘Intrialogue’ shows us another important character of modern media: their public one. This poem seems to have many images in common with ‘Dusk’, but the distinctive difference between them is that while, as the word “thine” suggests, ‘Dusk’ expresses a personal dialogic vision, the image of ‘Intrialogue’ sets itself not in a private situation where the poem is read in silence but in a collective one like a movie theatre. As the words “asphalt” and “avion” (French “airplane”) suggest, the setting of the poem is in public space and modern city. The dominant image of ‘Dusk’ is the forest, but in ‘Intrialogue’, the word “Birken” (German “birch wood”) which suggests the image of forest is excluded. Something “uncanny” or mysterious is perceived on the public road which is made of “asphalt”, and we go to the collective unconscious by getting on “the airplane”. It is then possible to argue that the idea of cinematic montage served him as an example for the idea of an ideal language. In ‘Workshop’ which appeared in the same issue with ‘Intrialogue’, Jolas argued that “the final morphological process of modern languages” would be “helped dynamically by the new technological means such as cinema, the radio, and other mechanical forces” (‘Workshop’ 104). Thus, Jolas imagined his ideal language as a mass medium or “an inter-racial language” which would reach its audience collectively, as movies and radios do, “to express the collective inner vision of mankind” (‘Workshop’ 104).

Moreover, as Michael North points out, the idea of synaesthesia was essential for Jolas. It also played a decisive role in forming the idea of hallucination expressed as “hypnogogic hallucinations”. In spite of the notice, however, North does not give any explanation of synaesthesia. Similarly, Jean-Michel Rabaté points out that

*Finnegans Wake* features “verbal synaesthesia” but he does not make clear what synaesthesia is (Rabaté 1998/1999 248). This lack of adequate explanations or interpretations of synaesthesia suggests that as Stephen Kern asserts, the idea of synaesthesia was quite common in general art and literature from the late nineteenth century onwards (Kern 203). *The Concise Oxford English Dictionary* defines synaesthesia as “the production of a sense impression relating one sense or part of the body by stimulation of another sense or part of the body”. Jolas must have been conscious of this interaction between the senses, when he demanded the hallucination as an essential creative condition. He was attentive to this synaesthetic sensibility in *Work in Progress*. He considered audibility as an important function of the text. It is possible that when he argued that Joyce “gives odours and sounds that the conventional standard does not know”, and that Joyce’s “language is born anew before our eyes”, he was highly conscious of the cross-connecting synaesthetic effect that reading aloud and looking at the text give to its readers (“The Revolution of Language and James Joyce’ 113).<sup>8</sup> A certain force is exerted to equate or confuse sight with smell or hearing. Polyglot and neologism contributed to highlighting this force because, unlike film, a written text has its limit as far as it is written in accordance with “the conventional standard” way. Reading aloud and looking at the distorted words, he believed, could break “the worn-out verbal patterns” and evoke an unexpected image suitable “for our more sensitized nervous system” (“The Revolution of Language and James Joyce’ 109). Thus the synaesthetic sensibility was, for Jolas, a quite convincing textual strategy for introducing the visual and auditory dimensions in literature.

It is now clear that while Jolas’ ideal language heavily depended on the idea he developed, discussing the language of *Work in Progress* as “the language of the future”, his idea must be examined in the much broader cultural background we have seen. In other words, Jolas’ perspective for his ideal language project consists in much larger context in scope than just a single work can give him. For him, the ideal language, like cinematic montage, should juxtapose unconnected images to create a new reality. The new reality, according to his definition in ‘Notes on Reality’, should not be fixed and static but always open for further renewal by “the conscious will” through the conflict between juxtaposed contrary images. The word should come from a personal “spontaneous” imagination and be transferred to pub-

lic mass with cacophonous sounds and striking visibility.

### 3

Jolas was, moreover, not an imitator of Joyce. To demonstrate the differences between them, it is necessary to compare Jolas' work with Joyce's in terms of their relationships with English language. In addition to Joyce, it is useful to compare the Basic English version of Joyce, because Basic English is another language which was conceived as an ideal language by Charles K. Ogden. The following passages are from two versions of 'Anna Livia Plurabelle' chapter in *Work in Progress*. Joyce's was first published in the November 1927 issue of *transition* and Ogden's was from the March 1932 issue of *transition*:

Joyce: Do you tell me that now? I do in troth. Orara por Orbe and poor Las Animas! Ussa, Ulla, we're umbas all! Mezha, didn't you hear it a deluge of times, ufer and yfer, respond to spond? You deed, you deed! I need, I need! It's that irrawaddyding I've stoke in my aars. It all but hushes the lethest sound. *Oronoko!*<sup>9</sup>

Ogden: Do you say that now? Truly I do. May Earth give piece to their hearts and minds. *Ussa, Ulla*, we're all of us shades. Why, haven't they said it a number of times, over and over, again and again? They did, they did. I've need, I've need! It's that soft material I've put in my ears. It almost makes the least sound quiet. *Oronoko!*<sup>10</sup>

In Joyce's passage, the phrase 'tell me' comes up many times throughout the chapter as a verbal motif of the dialogue of two washerwomen.<sup>11</sup> Here the opening conversation begins with the motif. But the dialogue immediately becomes the complex web of allusions which begin with the Spanish prayer 'orar por Orbe y por Las Animas' (to pray for the Earth and the Souls) into which Joyce fused many river names: the Orara in New South Wales, Australia, the Orba in Italy, the Orbe in Switzerland, the Orb in France and Rio de las Animas in Colorado.<sup>12</sup> Drawing on the close reading of Walton Litz, Marjorie Perloff explains in detail most of the

words in the passage, and she points out that this passage is a typical example of Joycean work, the condition of which, she argues, consists in “a reinvention of English as magnet language” to “produce a dense mosaic of intertextual references” (Perloff 88).

Although Ogden unjustifiably ignored the river-name punning, he demonstrated that what Joyce was doing in *Work in Progress* was certainly complex, but the complexity came from very simple combinations of words, and that such verbal inventions as neologism and portmanteau would not be as important as most readers of it thought, paraphrasing and rewriting the difficult words into simple ones. Susan Shaw Salier criticizes Ogden’s version as insufficient “translation” which makes multi-layered meanings of the text flat and uniform (Salier 864-865). She quotes the theory of Henri Godard on the different functions that language performs – “vernacular”, “vehicular”, “referential” and “mythic” ones. According to Godard, the “vernacular” function is characteristic of “the mother tongue or native language” spoken only in “a village, a small community or region”. The “vehicular” is of “the language of society” and its main purpose is for communication. The “referential” one plays a part in giving and keeping the information of “culture and tradition that assures the continuity of values through systematic references to enshrined works of the past”. The “mythic” language is fundamentally incomprehensible but the unintelligibility functions “as irrefutable proof of its sacred character” just like “the word ‘amen’ for example, or the Latin used in the Catholic Church”.<sup>13</sup> Salier accuses the Basic version of functioning only as the “vehicular”. However, as Ogden admitted in *Basic English*, his intention was not to develop Basic English as a literary language, but to enlarge the possibility of it as “the international Auxiliary language” or “a universal language” (Ogden 5, 8-9). Strictly speaking, the Basic English version of the text is not a literary translation but a linguistic demonstration of its adaptability, flexibility and analytic simplicity.

I. A. Richards effectively summarized the five characteristics of Basic English as having wide “range of coverage”, “economy of effort, uniformity or normality and directly learnable” quality (Richards 63). Basic English was made of 850 words which dispensed “with practically all phonetic ambiguities” by the help of the gramophone records and its grammatical rules were “reduced to a minimum” (Ogden 18). Basic English enabled us, Ogden claimed, to put the entire language

system 'on the back of an ordinary sheet of business notepaper' (Ogden 7). While Basic English came from the necessity of everyday life, especially that of those who "do not already speak English" (Ogden 7), it also came from that of renewal of practical English. As I. A. Richards pointed out, from the early twentieth century onwards, there was "some paralysis of the imagination" of those who spoke English (Richards 62). This paralysis meant the lack of ability to learn and develop "any words we need for special purposes" (Richards 63). Richards argued that Basic English could provide English speakers, whether they were native speakers or not, with a means to break the paralysis by inventing many combinations of Basic vocabularies (Richards 62-63), as, for example, Ogden did in his version of Joyce. Richards believed in the possibility of improving the imagination suffered from and worn out by everyday usage of English. What is to be noted here is that the idea of Basic English comes from a necessity for a new language to create a consciousness proper to the age, and that the improvement of individual attitudes toward English is believed to lead to a total reformation of English language itself. With the demonstration of its broad "range of coverage" by re-writing the text of Joyce, Basic English attempted to realize its universality which would unite people all over the world who spoke different languages as well as English with a "common core" or common "body of knowledge selected and organized on the principle of" its practical and economical rules (Richards 63).

Although the differences between Basic English and Joyce seem to be great, they demonstrate a common quality which is the constitutive and comprehensive power of English. The passage of 'Anna Livia Plurabelle' reveals a constitutive and comprehensive ability of English to take all other foreign words into it. As we have seen, the passage of Joyce keeps the basic structure and rhythm of English sentence "to produce a dense mosaic of intertextual references". Basic English demonstrates the same ability of English with the opposing means which is reduced to "a minimum" element. It was believed to break down the "paralysis of the imagination" of English speakers, providing them with a "common core" as the "constitutive" element which caused to develop the possibility of bringing the maximum, "comprehensive" effect with the minimum means. Both Joyce and Basic English demonstrate the flexibility and adaptability of English. It is a fundamentally constitutive and comprehensive strength of English that it can be contested

from such opposing ideas as maximum expansion (Joyce) and minimum contraction (Basic) of English.

Jolas is totally different from Joyce and Ogden in terms of his relationship with English. Certainly Jolas shared the idea of Basic English that the reformation of the individual consciousness toward words would lead to a total reformation of language. However, as 'Intrialogue' shows, Jolas' multilingual poetry did not privilege English as a "magnet language" or as the only dominant language that gives us a "common core". Instead, his works emphasised the juxtaposition of English, French, German and other language. Dougald McMillan judges Jolas' poems severely, arguing that his multilingual poetry "has left Americans, French, and Germans uncertain as to the national category he belongs in" (McMillan 116). But Marjorie Perloff argues against McMillan that his assessment is to judge Jolas by the very idea he was attacking (Perloff 92). As Perloff points out, "the problem is not national indeterminacy" (Perloff 92) but monolingual value, that is to say, Jolas never gave a language its privileged value. He believed that literature required more than simply an enrichment of just one language. This belief was reflected in *transition*. At first, literary works of foreign language in *transition* appeared in English translation, but later from the February 1933 issue (number 22) onwards they appeared in their original languages. As Craig Monk argues, this shift shows that Jolas' quest for the ideal language was "a topic of interest not merely to the editors" of *transition* but also to those artists who shared "a much wider program of modernist language experimentation" practised in *transition*.<sup>14</sup> 'Intrialogue', which appeared in the same issue, demonstrated this policy, and the juxtaposed words, while seeming to place Joyce as authority and model to be imitated, also questioned the notion on which Joyce's polyglot, neologism and Basic English depended, namely the constitutive and comprehensive power of English. Jolas never denied the flexibility of English, and his idea of ideal language was always based on it. But he never accepted the privileged value of monolingualism. For him, the ideal language should be a critique of monolingual value and authority. In this sense, *Work in Progress* is the source and point of departure of Jolas' ideal language project.

## Conclusion

Certainly, the idea of Jolas' ideal language derived from that of "the language of future". But Jolas developed his own idea in the process of theorizing and practising his ideal language. He could not specify what his ideal language was, but his idea was crystallized into his multilingual poem which played a crucial part in questioning the notion of monolingual predominance, which is paradoxically represented here by *Work in Progress*. Jolas' ideal language was fundamentally multilingual. It should be a critique of value and authority of monolinguals.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Suzette A. Henke, 'Examining Beckett and Company.' *Re-Viewing Classics of Joyce Criticism*, ed. Janet Egleson Dunleavy (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991) 60-81. This collection was published in 1929 entitled *Our Examination Round His Factification for Incarnation of Work in Progress*.
- <sup>2</sup> Dougald McMillan, *transition: The History of a Literary Era, 1927-1938* (London: Calder and Boyars, 1975) 48.
- <sup>3</sup> See also 'Logos'. 27-28.
- <sup>4</sup> See also 'Logos'. 28-30.
- <sup>5</sup> Theo Rutra, 'Poems.' *transition* 8 (1927) 145. Theo Rutra is pseudonym of Jolas and 'Dusk' is one of the 'Poems'.
- <sup>6</sup> McMillan 115. He evaluates this poem as Jolas's 'direct expression of the unconscious'.
- <sup>7</sup> According to '*transition's* Revolution-of-the Word dictionary' which appeared in the same issue, the word 'intrialogue' is defined as 'an inner-tri-lingual-converse of the mind'. In spite of the definition, 'Intrialogue' demonstrates its multilingual quality. See *transition* 22 (1933) 122.
- <sup>8</sup> For the interaction between hearing and seeing in *Finnegans Wake*, see Steven Connor, *James Joyce* (Plymouth: Northcote House, 1996) 94.
- <sup>9</sup> James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2000) 214. The *transition* version of 'Anna Livia Plurabelle' was published as 'Continuation of A Work in Progress' in *transition* 8 (1927): 17-35.

- <sup>10</sup> Charles K. Ogden, 'James Joyce's Anna Livia Plurabelle in Basic English', *transition*, 21 (1932): 260.
- <sup>11</sup> William York Tindall, *A Reader's Guide to Finnegans Wake* (New York: Syracuse UP, 1969) 140-149. Fred H. Higginson, *Anna Livia Plurabelle: The Making of a Chapter* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1960) 3-15.
- <sup>12</sup> The names of river referred to in the paragraph are all indebted to Marjorie Perloff's reading of the passage in 'Logocinéma of the Frontiersman: Eugene Jolas's Multilingual Poetics and Its Legacies.' *Differentials: Poetry, Poetics, Pedagogy* (Alabama: U of Alabama P, 2004) 87-88 and Roland McHugh, *Annotations to Finnegans Wake* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1991) 214 and Lawrence Rainey's commentary on 'Anna Livia Plurabelle.' *Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence Rainey (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005) 298. English translation of the Spanish prayer is also referred to by both: McHugh 214 and Rainey 298.
- <sup>13</sup> Henri Godard, qtd in John Johnson, 'Translation as Simulacrum,' *Rethinking Translation: Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology*, ed. Lawrence Venuti (London: Routledge, 1992) 53.
- <sup>14</sup> Craig Monk, 'Eugene Jolas and the Translation Policies of *transition*.' *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature* 32 (1999) 30. In the same page, Monk argues that we can consider Jolas' quest for the ideal language in a much wider program of modernist language experimentation, drawing from George Steiner's argument of the language reformation programs prevalent between the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. See George Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1975) 115-247.

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